

# N.C. PRAMS FACT SHEET

November 2005

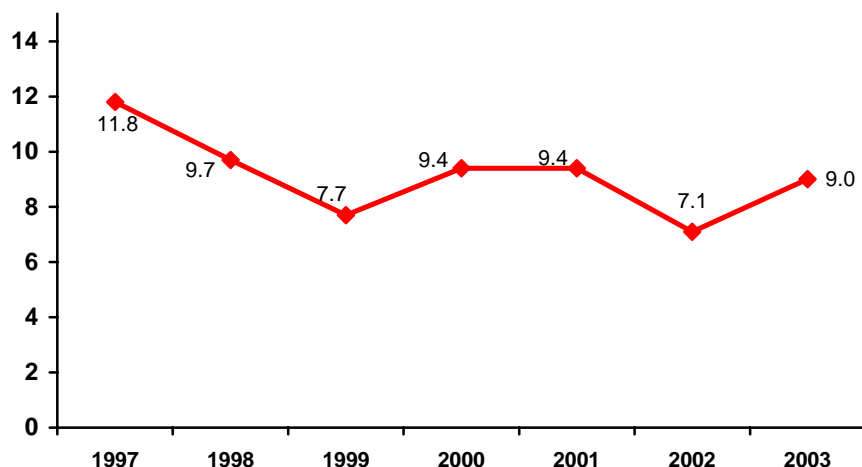


## Physical Violence

### N.C. Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

- ▶ It is estimated that nearly 2.1 million women are raped or physically assaulted annually in the United States.
- ▶ The problem is magnified when the victim of violence is pregnant, because there are additional health risks to both the woman and her unborn child.
- ▶ The effects of physical violence can negatively affect a woman's reproductive health, as well as other aspects of her physical and mental well-being. Immediate effects on the pregnancy include fetal fractures; rupture of the uterus, liver, or spleen; miscarriage/stillbirth; and preterm labor. Long-term risks to the mother include chronic pain, physical disability, drug and alcohol abuse, and depression. Women with a history of physical or sexual abuse also have an increased risk for unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and adverse pregnancy outcomes.
- ▶ Many women who report rape, physical assault, or stalking are victimized by a current or former partner. Among the women who reported violence in 2003, 69 percent said the perpetrator was a current spouse or partner and 35 percent said it was someone else (which can include an ex-husband or ex-partner). About 4 percent answered both.
- ▶ PRAMS defines physical violence as pushing, hitting, slapping, kicking, or any other way of physically hurting someone.
- ▶ Mothers who reported physical violence in 2003 had a greater prevalence of delivering a low birthweight (< 2500 grams) baby (10.3%) than those who did not report any physical violence (7.9%).

**Percentage of women reporting physical violence before, during, or after pregnancy (by anyone):  
N.C. PRAMS, 1997-2003**



- The percentage of women who reported physical violence around the time of pregnancy decreased from 11.8 percent in 1997 to 9.0 percent in 2003. However, the percentage increased slightly from 2002 (7.1%) to 2003 (9.0%).
- The 2003 percentage of 9.0 translates into an estimated 10,163 women in North Carolina experiencing physical violence around the time of pregnancy.
- The percentage of women who reported physical violence before pregnancy was 5.2 percent in 2003, compared to 5.0 percent who reported physical violence during the last three months of pregnancy, and 3.5 percent who reported physical violence after pregnancy. The same woman may have reported violence in more than one of the three time periods, so these percentages add up to more than the percentage for the three time periods combined (9.0%).